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LED Bulb Replacement

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How to replace tail lights on S-series

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10-14-2006, 04:06 PM

#1

dmc
Member
Join Date: May 2006
Posts: 270
[dmc's Photos](#)
2000 SL2

How to replace tail lights on S-series

This how-to covers replacement of brake lights, rear turn signals, and reverse lights on the S-series. I did this on a 3rd gen SL2, but the instructions are probably applicable to most models and years.

You will need the following:

- * A T-15 Torx screwdriver

This is a quick operation. I was able to do it in five minutes in a parking lot.

First, find out which light(s) are burned out. The easiest way is to have a helper hit the brakes/turn signal/reverse while you stand behind the car. If you can't find a helper, you can just park so your car's rear-end faces the side of a shiny car, and you should be able to see which lights are coming on in the rear view mirror.

Next, go to the auto parts store and get the proper bulbs. I used Sylvania Long Life bulbs. Don't bother with OEM bulbs, they're needlessly expensive. You can also pick up special grease to coat the bulb socket if you like (it's sold in a little packet at the counter of most auto parts stores).

Pop your trunk, and you'll see two Torx screws on the side of the tail light assembly. Use your T-15 screwdriver on these.

The tail light assembly should easily slide out at this point. You'll see four connectors: a wiring harness, reverse light, turn signal, and brake light. Disconnect the proper connector, and you'll see the burned-out bulb. Give it a yank, and it will pop right out.

Coat the new bulb's base with dielectric grease (optional), and insert the new bulb. It will go in with a satisfying snap.

Slide the tail light assembly into the body of the car, and screw the two Torx screws back in.

You probably got a 2-pack of bulbs, so go ahead and replace the same bulb on the other side of the car! It will most likely burn out soon anyway.

REWARD EXCELLENCE!

Rate the quality of this post and help *dmc* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!

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10-15-2006, 05:40 AM

#2

Tiger
Master Member

Re: How to replace tail lights on S-series

You just reminded me of something on my "To Do" list. One bulb was replaced when I bought new tires. Years ago I was pulled over when a bulb had burned out on my Sentra brake lights. Just too hard to monitor unless you have a helper.

...



Join Date: May 2004
Location: St. Louis
Posts: 2,471

[Tiger's Photos](#)

1999 SL2



Truth alone triumphs, not untruth.

REWARD EXCELLENCE!



Rate the quality of this post and help *Tiger* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!



10-15-2006, 10:17 AM

#3

[eRic 02sc2](#)

Super Member



Join Date: Feb 2000
Location: Closed Course.
Professional Driver.
Posts: 14,543

[eRic 02sc2's Photos](#)



Re: How to replace tail lights on S-series

I use a SKY umbrella that I got from the Detroit Auto Show to press the brake pedal while I'm in back of my Saturn checking the bulbs. wedge it between the drivers seat and the door sill. lamp bulb replacement instructions are in the Saturn Owner's Handbook.

...

eRic 02sc2

DR SCCA Solo 2001,2002 1st DSP

WHRRj 2007,2010 Fun Run 1st

DR SCCA 2008 Triathlon 1st PF

DR SCCA Solo 2009 2nd ST

DR SCCA Solo 2010 1st ST

Crutchfield: pkeqe-6j8e3-d2qqe

REWARD EXCELLENCE!



Rate the quality of this post and help *eRic 02sc2* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!



10-17-2006, 05:22 PM

#4

[David 93 SL2m](#)

Master Member



Join Date: May 2000
Location: North America
Posts: 3,594

[David 93 SL2m's Photos](#)

2004 VUE 2.2L
2007 ION-3 Sedan



Re: How to replace tail lights on S-series

Typically we turn a vehicle's bulb connector 1/6 of a turn to remove and reinstall it. Sometimes we have to press a tab while turning it for removal. Also sometimes the connectors are "keyed" meaning the notches are not equally sized and not equally spaced, so look at the connector before reinstalling so you don't force it and perhaps break something along the way.

Some bulbs slide in and out, others need to be turned slightly before pulling out or pushing in. Again, some bulbs are "keyed" and not completely symmetrical, so look at the base of the bulb before reinstalling so you don't force it...

Dielectric grease is a good idea. It helps to seal out moisture and prevent rust, it helps dissipate heat, and it helps the bulbs come out easily the next time they need to be replaced.

...

Current

• 2004 VUE 124K

• 2007 ION3 112K

...

Past

• 1993 SL2 212K

• 1993 SC2 140K

• 1996 SC2 157K

• 1996 SC2 126K

• 2001 SC2, 145K

• 2002 L200 20K

• 2002 SL1 129K

...

REWARD EXCELLENCE!



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01-10-2010, 12:24 PM

#5

[Radar011](#)

New Member



Join Date: Jan 2010
Posts: 2



Re: How to replace tail lights on S-series

I opened my trunk and I cannot locate the two Torx screws on the side of the tail light assembly.

REWARD EXCELLENCE!



Rate the quality of this post and help *Radar011* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!



01-10-2010, 12:26 PM

Radar011

New Member

Join Date: Jan 2010

Posts: 2

Re: How to replace tail lights on S-series

I opened my trunk and I could not locate the Torx screws that are on the side of the tail light assembly. Are they hidden behind any type of covering?

REWARD EXCELLENCE!

Rate the quality of this post and help Radar011 reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!

quote

01-10-2010, 10:52 PM

Tiger

Master Member

Join Date: May 2004

Location: St. Louis

Posts: 2,471

Tiger's Photos

1999 SL2

Re: How to replace tail lights on S-series

Quote:

Originally Posted by Radar011

I opened my trunk and I could not locate the Torx screws that are on the side of the tail light assembly. Are they hidden behind any type of covering?

No, not hidden. Just had to replace my brake light bulb for the 4th time. Mine torx screws are black in color, so you may need good light to see them. They are pretty flush, so they do not stick out a lot. They are on the edge of the assemble that faces the trunk. Once removed the assembly pivots out. Just make sure to hook in back in/line it up so it is secure. I did not do that all the time.

I ordered some LED bulbs on Ebay since mine keep going out. I believe the key is the grease they talked about. Put some on the bottom of the bulb. I believe that has been one of my problems. Too much heat. Once reason I am going to LED bulbs. Could be other problems though (hope not).

...

Truth alone triumphs, not untruth.

REWARD EXCELLENCE!

Rate the quality of this post and help Tiger reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!

quote

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